


Start Your Military Service Record Request (DD Form 214 & SF-180)


Military personnel records can be used for proving military service, or as a valuable tool in genealogical research. Most veterans and their next-of-kin can obtain **free** copies of their [DD Form 214 \(Report of Separation\)](#) and other military and medical records several ways.

Use the following to request veterans' service records from WW I - Present. ([Looking for Pre-WWI Service Records?](#))

Launch the eVetRecs System to start your request online.



Download form SF-180 to mail or fax your request.



Online Requests Using eVetRecs

Our online eVetRecs system creates a customized order form to request information from your, or your relative's, military personnel records. You may use this system if you are:

- A **military veteran**, or
- Next of kin of a **deceased**, former member of the military. The **next of kin** can be any of the following:
 - Surviving spouse that has not remarried
 - Father
 - Mother
 - Son
 - Daughter
 - Sister
 - Brother

If you are **not** the veteran or next of kin, you must complete the [Standard Form 180](#)  (SF 180). See [Access to Military Records by the General Public](#) for more details.

Use the link at the top of this page to get started using eVetRecs or visit [eVetRecs Help and FAQ](#) to learn more.

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Required Information

Your request must contain certain basic information for us to locate your service records. This information includes:

- The veteran's complete name used while in service
- Service number
- Social security number
- Branch of service
- Dates of service
- Date and place of birth (especially if the service number is not known).
- If you suspect your records may have been involved in the [1973 fire](#), also include:
 - Place of discharge
 - Last unit of assignment

- Place of entry into the service, if known.
- All requests must be **signed** and **dated** by the veteran or next-of-kin.
- **If you are the next of kin of a deceased veteran**, you must provide proof of death of the veteran such as a copy of death certificate, letter from funeral home, or published obituary.

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Recommended Information (optional)

While this information is not required, it is extremely helpful to NPRC staff in understanding and fulfilling your request:

- The **purpose or reason** for your request, such as applying for veterans benefits, preparing to retire, or researching your personal military history.
- Any **deadlines** related to your request. We will do our best to meet any priorities. For example, you may be applying for a VA-guaranteed Home Loan and need to provide proof of military service by a specific date.
- Any other specific information, documents or records you require from your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) besides your Report of Separation (DD Form 214).
- For additional details on what information may or may not be included, please see the [Special Notice to Veterans and Family Members regarding requests for copies of military personnel and/or medical files](#).

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"Emergency" Requests and Deadlines

If there is an emergency or deadline associated with your request, please explain this in the "**Comments**" section of **eVetRecs** or in the "**Purpose**" section of the **SF-180** so that we fully understand the situation and we will do our best to meet your priority.

If your request involves a burial in a National Cemetery operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the cemetery staff will work directly with us to obtain the required records for the service. If your request involves funeral services provided by a non-VA/private provider, the next of kin may fax the request (including signature of the next of kin) to us at 314-801-0764. If your request involves the burial of a Marine Corps veteran, you may contact the USMC Liaison Officer at 314-538-3155.

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Where to send my request

You can mail or fax your **signed** and **dated** request to the National Archives's National Personnel Record Center (NPRC). Most, but not all records, are stored at the NPRC. **Be sure to use the address specified by eVetRecs or the instructions on the SF-180.** [Locations of Military Service Records](#).

- **NPRC Fax Number :**
314-801-9195

- **NPRC Mailing Address:**
National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
314-801-0800

Please note that requests which are sent by Priority Mail, FedEx, UPS, or other "express" services will only arrive at the NPRC sooner. They will not be processed any faster than standard requests. See the section above on emergency requests and deadlines.

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Cost:

Military personnel and health record information is usually **free** for veterans, next-of-kin, and authorized representatives. If your request involves a service fee, you will be notified as soon as possible.

NOTE: Some records (Navy and Marine Corps enlisted personnel pre-1939) are in the process of being accessioned into the National Archives' collection and are no longer considered part of the NPRC, but are now part of the [new Archival Programs Division](#). Standard reproduction charges may apply for copies of these documents. The process for requesting these records remains the same for now.

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Response Time:

Response times for records requested from the [National Personnel Records Center \(NPRC\)](#) vary greatly depending on the nature of the request. For example, the NPRC Military Personnel Records facility currently has a pending workload of 51,000 requests and is receiving approximately 4,900 requests per day. We are responding to requests for replacement copies of separation documents only within 10 days about 90% of the time. For requests involving other types of information or documents from records that are on file, we currently are working on those received in November 2010 and will respond, on average, in 1-2 weeks. Additionally, requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the [1973 fire](#) or older records which require extensive search efforts may take six months or more to complete. Overall we are responding to 74% of all requests received within 10 days.

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Checking the Status of Your Request:

Once you have allowed sufficient time for us to receive and process your request (about 10 days), you may check the status of your request by e-mail through our NPRC Customer Service Center at mpr.status@nara.gov. Please provide the request number if you have one, the name, address and phone number of the requester, and the veteran's branch of service to aid us to finding your request in our system. You will receive a return e-mail from us with a projected completion date for your request.

You may also telephone the **NPRC Customer Service Line** (this is a long-distance call for most customers): **314-801-0800**

Note: Our peak calling times are weekdays between 10:00 am CST and 3:00 pm CST. Staff is available to take your call as early as 7:00 am and as late as 5:00 pm cst.

This number will allow you to hold until a technician is available to help you.

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Other Methods to Obtain your Military Service Records

Other potential methods to obtain your records include [writing a letter](#), visiting the NPRC, contacting your state or county, or hiring an independent researcher. See [Other Methods to Obtain your Military Service Records](#) for more details.

NOTE: Some companies advertise DD Form 214 research services and will charge a fee for obtaining copies. This is provided as a **free** service by the National Archives and Records Administration.

Access to Military Records by the General Public

Limited information from Official Military Personnel Files is releasable to the general public without the

consent of the veteran or the next-of-kin. You are considered a member of the general public if you are asking about a veteran who is no relation to you, or a veteran who is a relative but you are not the next-of-kin. Next-of-kin is defined as the unremarried widow or widower, son or daughter, father or mother, brother or sister of the deceased veteran.

See [Access to Military Records by the General Public and Researchers](#) for details on how to request service records.

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PDF files require the [free Adobe Reader](#).

More information on Adobe Acrobat PDF files is available on our [Accessibility page](#).

THE U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

www.archives.gov

Wednesday, July 25, 2007

Military Service Records and Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs, DD Form 214)

If you've been discharged from military service, your personnel files are stored here at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). We are the official repository for records of military personnel who have been discharged from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Coast Guard.

Recent military service and medical records are **not online**. However, most veterans and their next-of-kin can obtain **free** copies of their [DD Form 214 \(Report of Separation\)](#) and other records several ways:

- [Use our eVetRecs system to create your request](#)
- [Mail or Fax a Standard Form SF-180](#)
- [Learn more about requesting military service records](#)

Military personnel records are primarily administrative records and can contain information such as:

- enlistment/appointment
- duty stations and assignments
- training, qualifications, performance
- awards and medals
- disciplinary actions
- insurance
- emergency data
- administrative remarks
- separation/discharge/retirement (including [DD Form 214, Report of Separation, or equivalent](#))
- and other personnel actions.

Detailed information about the veteran's participation in military battles and engagements is NOT contained in the record.

Most Official Military Personnel Files contain both personnel and active duty health records, but this practice was discontinued by the service branches beginning in 1992. See [Military Medical and Health Records](#) for more details.

The National Archives's [National Personnel Records Center \(Military Personnel Records\) \(NPRC-MPR\)](#) stores records of individual military service pertaining to former service members who no longer have a service obligation. Included are records of veterans who are completely discharged (with no remaining reserve commitment), or who are retired or have died. Records are usually transferred to NPRC (MPR) within six months after these events. NPRC (MPR) does not have records of members who are still in the active or inactive reserves or in the National Guard. The records of each military service department on file at NPRC (MPR) are listed under [Location of Military Service Records](#).

The Department of Defense and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) signed an agreement to make the Official Military Personnel Files a permanent series of records, transferred to NARA custody 62 years after the service member's separation from the military. The new Archival Program Division at the National Personnel Records Center now holds nearly 1.2 million official military personnel files of former US Navy and Marine Corps enlisted personnel who served between 1885 and 1939. Also available are the records of 150 "persons of exceptional prominence", including former Presidents, famous military leaders, celebrities, entertainers and professional athletes who served in the military and have been deceased for at least 10 years. These records above are open to the public and researchers at the [Archival Research Room](#).

You can read more about Official Military Personnel Files and the activities within the NPRC in the article [20th-Century Veterans' Service Records Safe, Secure—and Available](#).

Additional information on the contents of Military Service Records and Personnel Files:

- [Navy Service Records](#)

From the Navy Office of Information

- [Content of the Official Military Personnel File](#)

From the Marine Corps Personnel Management Support Branch

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration


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Military Medical and Health Records

 [Use eVetRecs](#) to Get Copies of most Health & Medical Records.

Most Official Military Personnel Files at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) prior to 1992 contain both personnel and **active duty health records**. Health records cover outpatient, dental, and mental health treatment which a former member received while in the military service. Health records documents include induction and separation physical examinations, and routine medical care (doctor/dental visits, lab tests, etc.) when the patient was not admitted to a hospital.

In comparison, [clinical \(hospital inpatient\) records](#) are NOT filed with the health records but are generally retired to NPRC (MPR) by the hospital or facility which created them. Other medical records which would not be included are Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) records, or records for service after 1992 (detailed below).

The practice of filing health records with the personnel record portion has been discontinued. In 1992, the Army began retiring most of its former members' health records to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The other services made this change on the dates shown below:

Branch	Status	Health Record To VA
Army	Discharged, retired, or separated from any component	October 16, 1992
Air Force	Discharged, retired, or separated from Active Duty Discharged or retired from Reserves or National Guard	May 1, 1994 June 1, 1994
Navy	Discharged, retired, or separated from any component	January 31, 1994
Marine Corps	Discharged, retired, or separated from any component	May 1, 1994

Coast Guard	Discharged, retired, or separated from Active Duty - Reservists with 90 days active duty for training	April 1, 1998
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After the dates shown on the chart above, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Records Management Center, St. Louis, MO, maintains the active duty health records or manages their whereabouts when on loan within the VA. Call the VA toll free number at 1-800-827-1000 to identify the current location of specific health records and to find out how to obtain releasable documents or information.

Filing Medical Claims

Veterans who plan to file a claim for medical benefits with the [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#) do not need to request a copy of their military health record from NPRC (MPR). The original health records are provided by the Center when requested by the VA after the claim is filed. Many health records were lent to the Department of Veterans Affairs prior to the 1973 fire.

Veterans who filed a medical claim should contact the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in order to determine if their record is already on file. The VA Toll Free # is: 1-800-827-1000 and will connect the caller to the nearest VA office.

Page URL: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/medical.html>

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Requesting Replacement Medals, Awards, and Decorations

Requests for the issuance or replacement of military service medals, decorations, and awards should be directed to the specific branch of the military in which the veteran served. However, for Air Force (including Army Air Corps) and Army personnel, the National Personnel Records Center will verify the awards to which a veteran is entitled and forward the request with the verification to the appropriate service department for issuance of the medals.

The [Standard Form \(SF 180\), Request Pertaining to Military Records](#), is recommended for requesting medals and awards. Provide as much information as possible and send the form to the appropriate address from the following tables:

- [Army](#)
- [Air Force](#)
- [Navy](#)
- [Marines](#)
- [Coast Guard](#)

Army	
Where to write for medals	National Personnel Records Center Medals Section (NRPMA-M) 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where medals are mailed from	U.S. Army Soldier & Biological Chemical Command, IMMC Soldier Systems Directorate 700 Robbins Avenue P.O. Box 57997 Philadelphia, PA 19111-7997

Where to write in case of a problem or an appeal	Commander PERSCOM Attn: TAPC-PDO-PA 200 Stovall Street Alexandria, VA 22332-0471
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Air Force (including Army Air Corps & Army Air Forces)

Where to write for medals	National Personnel Records Center Air Force Reference Branch (NRPMF) 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where medals are mailed from	Headquarters Air Force Personnel Ctr AFPC/DPPPR 550 C Street West, Suite 12 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4714
Where to write in case of a problem or an appeal	Headquarters Air Force Personnel Ctr AFPC/DPPPR 550 C Street West, Suite 12 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4714

Navy

Where to write for medals	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where medals are mailed from	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where to write in case of a problem or an appeal	Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV 09B33) Awards & Special Projects Washington, DC 20350-2000

Marine Corps

Where to write for medals	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
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Where medals are mailed from	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where to write in case of a problem or an appeal	Commandant of the Marine Corps Military Awards Branch (MMMA) 3280 Russell Road Quantico VA 22134-5100

Coast Guard	
Where to write for medals	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where medals are mailed from	Bureau of Naval Personnel Liaison Office Room 5409 9700 Page Avenue St. Louis, MO 63132-5100
Where to write in case of a problem or an appeal	Commandant U.S. Coast Guard Medals and Awards Branch (PMP-4) Washington, DC 20593-0001

Generally, there is no charge for medal or award replacements. The length of time to receive a response or your medals and awards varies depending upon the branch of service sending the medals.

Cold War Recognition Certificate

In accordance with section 1084 of the Fiscal Year 1998 National Defense Authorization Act, the Secretary of Defense approved awarding Cold War Recognition Certificates to all members of the armed forces and qualified federal government civilian personnel who faithfully served the United States during the Cold War era, from Sept. 2, 1945, to Dec. 26, 1991.

Who is eligible? All members of the armed forces and federal government civilian personnel who faithfully served the United States during the Cold War era, Sept. 2, 1945, to Dec. 26, 1991.

This Center will, upon request, provide copies of DD 214's and other separation documents, as appropriate, to authorized requesters. These documents may be used to apply for the Certificate. Complete instructions for

obtaining a copy of your DD 214 may be found under [How to Request Copies of Military Service Records](#).

However, this center does not have the application form available, nor will we be able to supply the Certificate itself. For more information concerning the application process visit the [Cold War Recognition Certificate](#) web page.

Page URL: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/replacement-medals.html>

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